THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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The Cleveland Museum of Art's Annual Chalk Festival Returns September 15 and 16

Work alongside artists and create your own chalk masterpiece at the Museum

CLEVELAND (August 1, 2007) — The Cleveland Museum of Art (CMA) announces its 18th annual Chalk Festival on **Saturday, September 15, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.** and **Sunday, September 16, from Noon to 5 p.m**. Individuals, families, schools and neighborhood groups are all invited to participate. The festival will take place along the pathways in the Museum's Fine Arts Garden and meander down to Wade Lagoon.

Admission to the Chalk Festival is **FREE**, however there is a minimal cost for participation. A large square and 24-color box of chalk is $16, while a small square and a 12-color box of chalk is $8. Participants can sign up when they arrive. Groups are encouraged to pre-register by calling (216) 707-2483 by Wednesday, September 12. Non-paid advance registrations will be held until 1 p.m. Sunday, September 16.

CMA's Chalk Festival is inspired by the *I Madonnari* Italian chalk tradition. During the 16th century, beggars, using chalk on the plazas outside cathedrals, copied paintings of the Madonna by Raphael and his contemporaries. With these street painters, called *I Madonnari* (painters of the Madonna), an artistic tradition was born. Today, *I Madonnari* festivals are held annually in Europe, Africa, and the United States. CMA's festival brings this Renaissance tradition to Cleveland.

Participants can create their own masterpieces while working alongside featured chalk artists including Auigusto Bordelois, Tim Haas, Wendy Mahon, A.D. Peters, Edwige Winans, Rafael Valdivieso and CMA's Artistic Director of Community Arts, Robin VanLear.

Entertainment

During the festival, visitors will be able to enjoy live music by *Blues de Ville* on Saturday, September 15 and *Panic Steel Ensemble* and *Hue People* (a cappella) on Sunday, September 16.

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Chalk Workshops

Prior to the festival, a preparatory workshop will be held on chalk artistry. Participants will be able to make chalk using an old world recipe with new world materials. Participants also will learn professional techniques for masking, stenciling, shading and enlarging a picture. Participants can choose one session on either **Sunday, September 9,** from 2 to 4:30 p.m. or **Wednesday, September 12,** from 6 to 8:30 p.m. The workshops cost $25 for individuals and $75 for families, which includes materials and reserves chalk and a square at the festival. Children under 15 must register and attend with someone older. Call (216) 707-2483 to register.

Sparx in the City

The weekend of September 15-16 marks the fifth annual Sparx Gallery Hop where the work of more than 500 artists will be accessible to the public from inside galleries, studios, major festivals and art institutions. It's considered Ohio's largest art walk because of its geographic size and number of featured venues across the City Center, Tremont, Art Quarter, University Circle and Little Italy neighborhoods. The Chalk Festival is an official Sparx Gallery Hop event. During the festival, a trolley stop will link University Circle to other Sparx in the City Events. An all day weekend pass is $5. Passes can be purchased at any of the trolley stops found across the event footprint. Those under age 14 ride for free.

Sparx in the City, a program of the Downtown Cleveland Alliance, is a civic marketing initiative in Cleveland featuring regional artists as catalysts for stimulating vibrant street life and economic activity. Sparx in the City supports a multitude of Cleveland's street-level arts assets in many downtown neighborhoods. For more information, please visit: www.cleveland.com/Sparx

Parking

As a result of the Museum's renovation and expansion project, parking at the Museum garage will be unavailable for this year's Chalk Festival. Alternate parking locations include The Cleveland Botanical Gardens, The Cleveland Museum of Natural History, The Cleveland Institute of Art, parking garage near Severance Hall on East Blvd., or on the surrounding streets.

The Chalk Festival receives support through CMA Community Arts Partner Medical Mutual of Ohio. The Ohio Arts Council helped fund this program with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans.

The Cleveland Museum of Art is one of America's leading comprehensive museums. Its permanent collection is world renowned for its quality and breadth, spanning 6,000 years. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and art acquisitions. For more information on the museum, its holdings, programs, services and events, call 1-888-CMA-0033 or visit www.ClevelandArt.org.

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